
The Epistle

OF

ST. PAUL

TO THE

ROMANS

Translated in Paraphrase

By

CHARLES VENN PILCHER

D.D. (Oxon), Hon. D.D. Wycliffe College, Toronto
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THE EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE ROMANS

*The Letter was written from Corinth to the
Christian Church at Rome about 58 A.D.*

THE THEME OF THE LETTER

1. I, Paul, a bondslave of Christ Jesus, dedicated body and soul to do His will, by the mercy of God have been called and set apart as His ambassador to bear to the world the good news of what God has done and will do for mankind through this same Jesus. This message is not something entirely new. In the writings of the Old Testament Prophets God made promises of One who was to come. This Coming One is no less than God's own Son—on the one hand a physical descendant of Israel's great monarch, David; on the other hand declared to be the Son of God, in accordance with the holiness of His spirit, by the miracle of His resurrection from the dead. I repeat with reverence the sacred Name, Jesus Christ our Lord. It is through Him and by the undeserved kindness of God that I have been given the privilege of appointment to be God's ambassador, that men of all nations might yield themselves in trust and obedience to Him to the honour of His revealed Person. You Roman Christians are among the number of those who have been called to be Jesus Christ's possession. It is to all of you who live in Rome, beloved of God, called into this consecrated relationship, that I send this greeting. May the favour and peace of God our Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

First I thank my God for you all through Jesus Christ, who mediates our approach to God, that your trust in Christ and your loyal surrender to Him is talked of everywhere throughout the world. God, to whom I render spiritual service in my office as His messenger of the good news of His Son, is my witness how continually I remember you in my prayers, asking that, God willing, in some manner and at some near time my journey to you may be made possible. For I eagerly desire to see you that I may have the opportunity of imparting to you some spiritual grace, so that your interior life may be strengthened, that is to say, that we may have the mutual comfort of fellowship in one another's faith. I am anxious for you to know, brethren, that I have often intended to come to you, that I might have some spiritual fruit among you, as in so many other nations of the world. But so far I have been prevented. For I have a duty to civilised and uncivilised, to educated and uneducated. So, as far as I am concerned, I am eager to pass on the message also to you Christians in Rome. For I am not ashamed of this message, this Gospel. I have witnessed its divine power to free men from the bondage of sin, if only they will surrender themselves to Jesus Christ in loyal acceptance and trust. Yes, I have witnessed the effectiveness of this Gospel in the case of the Jew first and also of the non-Jew. For in this Gospel the righteousness of God is revealed in a system connected from first to last with faith, as the Prophet Habakkuk wrote : " The righteous man shall live by faith ".

THE CROSS OF CHRIST AND FAITH-RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now the divine displeasure at every form of offence, religious and moral, is obvious. It breaks from the sky

like lightning against men who suppress the truth by a life of iniquity. I say "suppress the truth", for all that may be known of God by the universal conscience and intuition of the human race was evident to them. The divine light, which lighteth every man, had revealed it to them. For since the dawn of history God's invisible attributes may be inferred from His creative acts. I refer, of course, to His eternal power and deity. Those men, therefore, are completely without excuse. Although they knew God in the sense just indicated, they rendered Him, as God, no thanks or praise. Instead they indulged in futile speculations until a blinding darkness obscured their foolish minds. They proclaimed themselves to be men of discernment, while all the time they were walking in the mists of deception. They actually came to believe that the glory of the immortal God could be represented by the statue of a mortal man or by the images of birds and beasts and reptiles. The consequence was that God judicially handed them over into bondage to the unclean passions of their lusts, so that they degraded their bodies with foul and mutual intercourse. God did this because they had changed the reality of God into a lie, and worshipped and did obeisance to the thing created rather than to the Creator, who is blessed for evermore. Amen. For this reason God delivered them over into bondage to vile passions. Even their women, from whose sex one might have expected something better, deserting the natural method surrendered themselves to be used by their menfolk after the unnatural manner; while the men, avoiding natural intercourse with the women, burnt in homosexual lust one towards another; men with men perpetrating the foul act and receiving in their bodies the natural and inevitable penalty of their perversion.

As they had not thought it proper to maintain their knowledge of God, God gave them up to a reprobate mind. They indulged in unseemly practices. They became obsessed with every type of wickedness, crime, greed, evil. Their minds overflowed with envy, murder, strife, deceit, suspicion. They whispered scandal and criticism. They hated God. They were insolent in word and thought. They were braggarts, inventors of sins, defiant to parents, foolish, implacable, without human feeling, utterly cruel. In fact, although they were aware of the divine sentence that those who do such things incur the death penalty, they not only indulged in such practices themselves, but also encouraged others to tread the same path of degeneration.

2. You, too, the critic of these vices of the heathen world, cannot escape the divine condemnation. In your judgement of the other man, you are, in fact, passing judgement on yourself. For you yourself are guilty of the very acts which you condemn. We are aware that the judgement of God upon all who indulge in the practices which we have been describing is in strict accord with reality. Surely you have not the presumption to believe that you, who criticise other guilty men while imitating their actions, will escape the divine condemnation. Do you despise God's abounding kindness and forbearance and longsuffering, ignoring the fact that the divine kindness is intended to lead you to repentance? Are you not conscious that in the hardness and stubbornness of your heart you are laying up for yourself a store of divine anger, to be revealed at the great day when the justice of God's judgement will be made manifest—that day on which God will render to every man according to his deeds? The principle of the divine judgement is plain. On

those who by persistent good living are seeking glory and honour and immortality God will bestow eternal life ; while those who live in a spirit of rebellion, violating the moral realities and conforming their lives to the principles of evil, will incur the divine anger and wrath. Tribulation and anguish will be the recompense of every soul of man which delivers itself over to work evil to the full. This is true of the Jew first and then of the non-Jew. On the other hand, glory and honour and peace will be the reward of every worker of good, of the Jew first and then of the non-Jew. There is no favouritism with God. All those who have sinned while not living under the Mosaic Law will be condemned without reference to the Law. Those who have sinned while living under the Law will be judged in accordance with the Law. It is not the hearers, but the doers of the Law, who will be acquitted at the Judgement-Seat of God. When non-Jews, who are not under the Law, keep by nature the commandments of the Law, such men, not possessing an external Law, are a law to themselves. By their character they show the work of the Law to be written on their hearts. Their conscience bears approving testimony to their conduct, while in that inner forum of the heart their thoughts accuse or acquit—I refer especially to what will happen on that great day when God will judge the secrets of men's hearts, as my Gospel message proclaims, at the tribunal of Jesus Christ.

You¹ are proud of the name of Jew. You rest your hope of salvation upon the Law. You boast that you know God ; that you are acquainted with His will ; that, as a result of your training in the Law, you are capable of distinguishing moral values. You are confident that you are able to guide the blind ; that

¹ St. Paul here addresses the Jews among his correspondents.

you are a light to those who dwell in darkness, a tutor of fools, a teacher of children. You are convinced that you possess in the Law an outline of knowledge and of truth. Such is your claim as a Jew over against the non-Jew. How comes it then that you, who instruct another, do not take your own lesson to heart? How is it that you, who teach that stealing is a sin, are nevertheless yourself guilty of stealing? How comes it that you, who denounce adultery, are yourself a breaker of the Seventh Commandment? How comes it that you, who detest image worship, rob idol temples? It is amazing, but true, that you, who are always boasting of your Mosaic Law, are continually bringing God into dishonour by your breaches of that Law. You fulfil the scriptural words: "The name of God is blasphemed throughout the Gentile world as a result of what you do and what you are".

Mark well this truth. Circumcision is of value to a man if he keep the Law. If, however, you are a breaker of the Law, your circumcision is of no more avail to you than uncircumcision. Morally, in fact, you are uncircumcised. On the other hand, if the uncircumcised non-Jew keeps the ordinances of the Law, his uncircumcision is morally equivalent to circumcision. In fact the man who is physically uncircumcised, but keeps the Law, will, on the Judgement Day, condemn you who, though ceremonially circumcised, are a transgressor of the Law. For the real Jew is not the man who is so in outward appearance, nor is the real circumcision that which is visible in the flesh of a man's body. The real Jew is the man who is so inwardly; and the real circumcision is that of the heart—a circumcision which is spiritual and not merely external. It is such a man who receives praise, not from his fellows, but from God.

3. What advantage then has the Jew, and what benefit does circumcision confer? Much from every point of view. Chiefly that to Israel were entrusted the Divine Scriptures. If certain Israelites proved faithless to their trust, that most certainly does not mean that God will be untrue to His promise. Rather let God be proved true and every man a liar. A passage in the Psalms suggests this, where the Psalmist addresses God in the following manner : " That your words may be justified and that when on trial you may win the case ". You will perhaps at this point suggest a difficulty. If the sin of us Jews be the means of establishing God's righteousness, it seems unfair of God to be angry with us. I am, of course, arguing on a purely human level. It is impossible for us to assent to the idea that the Judge of all the world should be unfair. Or again, if the truth of God is made manifest to His glory by my falsehood, why am I in this case judged as a sinner? Why should we not say, as some people in fact falsely accuse us of saying : " Let us do evil that good may come " ? Quite obviously all who express such sentiments are to be condemned.

Let us resume the argument. Have we Jews any definite advantage over non-Jews? Not absolutely. We have already shown Jews and non-Jews alike to be sinners. The Scripture bears this out, for we read : " There is none righteous, no, not one : There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable ; There is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre ; With their tongues they have used deceit ; The poison of asps is under their lips : Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness : Their feet are swift to shed blood : Destruction and misery are in their ways :

And the way of peace have they not known : There is no fear of God before their eyes ''.

Now we know that the words of the Hebrew Scriptures are addressed to those who are living under the Mosaic Law, in order that every mouth may be stopped and that all humanity may fall under the divine judgement. In fact, as Scripture makes quite clear, no man can succeed in winning God's acquittal by keeping the whole Law, for the effect of the Law is to produce a guilty conscience.

But now, in these days, entirely independently of the Law, a righteousness of God has been manifested—a righteousness which is at once the righteousness of the divine nature and a righteousness which God imputes or attributes to man. This righteousness was foreshadowed by the Law itself and by the utterances of the Prophets. I refer, of course, to the new method of acquiring the divine righteousness—a method which depends simply upon sincere trust and saving reliance upon Jesus Christ—a righteousness which is imputed to all without distinction who commit themselves in appropriating trust to Him. Two facts are to be marked. First, all men are sinners. They come short of the glory of the divine standard. Second, we may, as a gift of the free mercy of God, without of ourselves doing anything to merit it, be accepted as righteous on the basis of the redemption wrought by Christ Jesus. For God set forth on the Cross His own Son to make propitiation for our sins by His own blood—a propitiation which may be appropriated by simple trust. In this manner God made it plain that His passing over of the sins of men aforetime was not due to an immoral laxity. By the sacrificial death of Christ in these latter days He manifested His essential justice and adherence to Law, so that He might remain himself just while at

the same time accepting as just the sinner who throws himself in trust on Jesus.

Is it then any longer possible for a man to boast of his own merit ? No. All such boasting is from now on utterly excluded. On what principle ? That of earning salvation by obedience to the Mosaic Law ? No, but by the principle of faith. For we reckon that a man is accounted righteous by God quite apart from any obedience to legal requirements. Does this divine activity have reference to Jews only, or also to the whole of mankind ? Most assuredly to the whole of mankind. It is one and the same God who accepts Jew and non-Jew alike on the basis of faith. It may seem at first sight that by this faith principle we are superseding the Law. We shall, therefore, now proceed to show that we are doing no such thing. On the contrary we are establishing the deeper principles of Holy Scripture.

4. A Jewish objector may say to me : " It is not easy to accept your statement that you are establishing the Law by your teaching that God accepts a man on the basis of loyal trust in Himself, when our Rabbis tell us that the Law most plainly teaches that a man earns or merits salvation by his obedience to the Law ". Very well. Let us consider the case of our ancestor Abraham. It is true that if God accepted him on the basis of merit, he had something to boast about. But even then he could boast only before men, for no man has anything to boast about when confronted with God. But listen to what Scripture itself says about Abraham : " Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness ". Now the worker receives his pay, not as a favour, but as a debt. But in the case of the man who does nothing, but believes

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in the God who reckons as just the ungodly, it is his faith that is reckoned to him for righteousness. David, in the thirty-second Psalm, speaks the felicitation of the man to whom God imputes righteousness independently of anything which he has done : " Blessed are they whose breaches of the Law have been forgiven and whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will assuredly impute no sin ".

Is this felicitation confined to circumcised Israel, or is it intended also for the uncircumcised Gentile world ? Surely it is intended for all. Remember the scriptural words : " Abraham's faith was reckoned to him for righteousness ". Was this faith thus reckoned to him for righteousness after he had been circumcised or before he had been circumcised ? It was reckoned to him while he was still uncircumcised. In fact, he received the token of circumcision as a seal of the faith-righteousness which was granted to him while he was still uncircumcised. In this way it was possible for him to be the father of the uncircumcised who believe, and to whom righteousness is imputed through their faith. In this way it is also possible for him to be the father of those who are circumcised who do not rely upon their circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of our father Abraham who believed, while he was still uncircumcised.

Again, the promise to Abraham and his descendants that he should be the heir of the world was not given to him through the Law, nor was the promise dependent upon the Law. It was dependent upon the righteousness imputed to him through faith. For if those who depended for their salvation on obedience to the Law were the heirs of the world, faith would have lost its value, and the promise would have been nullified, for the sole result of the Law is to produce disobedience

and so to evoke the divine wrath. In fact, this tragic result follows from the possession of the Law, for where there is no Law there can be no disobedience and sin. For this reason it was necessary that the divine plan should take its start from faith in order that God's great gift of the Messianic blessing might be the free bestowal of His favour. In this way the promise can be valid for all Abraham's spiritual seed—that is to say, not merely valid for those who are under the Law, but also valid for all who follow Abraham's faith. Thus Abraham is the father of us all, Jews and non-Jews alike. So Scripture says : " I have appointed thee to be the father of many nations". God gave Abraham this honour because he believed God who quickeneth the dead and calls things that are not into being. The story of God's dealings with Abraham and Sarah makes this plain. Abraham, beyond all rational grounds of hope, trusted God's promise that he should have a son, and so become the father of many nations. These were the words of the divine promise : "So shall thy seed be even as the stars for multitude ". Abraham did not allow his trust in God to weaken, although he recognised that his own body had become impotent through age, since he was about one hundred years old. Nor did the atrophy of Sarah's womb lead him to doubt. In the presence of the promise of God he did not hesitate through unbelief for a moment. On the contrary, his faith gave him the necessary bodily power. He ascribed all to God, being fully convinced that what God had promised He was able to bring to pass. It was this faith of his which was reckoned to him for righteousness.

Now these words of Scripture : " It was reckoned to him for righteousness", were not written only to apply to him, but also to apply to us. To us, in the

purpose of God, righteousness was to be credited in a similar manner through faith—that is to us who put our faith in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead—Jesus, who was delivered to death upon the Cross because of our sins and was raised from the dead in order that we, through Him, might be accounted righteous.

5. Since, then, we have been accounted as righteous from the moment when we committed ourselves to Christ in loyal trust, let us appropriate our possessions and enjoy the peace which we have with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him, by faith, we have received this introduction to God's favour in which we stand, while we exult in the assured hope of one day sharing the divine glory. More than this, we actually exult in our sufferings, since we know that suffering is a school of constancy, while constancy produces the reliability of the veteran, and this quality again kindles hope. This hope is no mere illusion, since a consciousness of the love of God to us is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which God has bestowed upon us. Now this love of God to us has been specially made manifest in the fact that Christ, at the divinely ordained moment in human history, while we ourselves were utterly powerless, nay more, were utterly irreligious, voluntarily laid down His life for us. Consider the unique character of this divine love. It would be difficult to find a man willing to sacrifice his life for a person who was coldly strict in his religious duties ; though it is conceivable that someone might be willing to give his life for a man who showed the attractive qualities of a warm and human goodness. But God displayed His own love to us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Consider further. If God was

willing to do the difficult thing, how much more will He do the relatively easy thing? If He was willing to pay the price of the death of His Son, in order that we might be accounted righteous, how much more easily shall we be delivered from sin's doom? In other words, if, while we were in a state of enmity to God, we were reconciled to Him by the stupendous fact of the death of His Son, how much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved both here and hereafter by our share in His life? Yes, and even now, we exult in our sense of that union with God which has been brought about by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through His great act that we are already in possession of the wonder of our reconciliation.

This great work, which Christ achieved as the Representative of humanity, leads us to compare Him with that other representative of our race. We read in the Book of Genesis the story which tells how sin, as a malignant power, entered human history through the wrong-doing of one man. Sin brought with it the penalty of death. So it came to pass that the doom of death involved all men, since all Adam's descendants actually fall into sin. I must qualify this last statement. Before the giving of the Mosaic Law sin was in the world, but when there is no Law sin is not reckoned as guilt. Yet sin dominated our race during the period from Adam to Moses even in the case of those who had not sinned, as Adam did, in violation of a definite divine prohibition. Thus the tendency to sin was transmitted from the first representative man. Adam, as the first representative of the race, becomes a figure of our second and greater Representative, Christ. Both transmitted the results of their actions. But how different are these results! The Fall of Man is a very different thing from the free gift of God's favour. As a result of the fall of the one representative man, many

incurred the doom of death. How much more fitting it is that the free favour of God and the gift of righteousness bestowed through the free favour of Jesus Christ, the second Representative Man, should abound for the benefit of multitudes of men !

There is another difference. The free gift of the divine grace is something greater than the ill effects of one man's sinning. The judicial sentence took its occasion from one man's act of sin and resulted in condemnation. God's free gift followed upon many actual sins, but resulted in acquittal. If death reigned as a result of one man's sin, namely, through the act of one representative man, much more shall those who receive the abundance of God's kindness and His free gift of righteousness reign in life eternal through the act of the other Representative Man, Jesus Christ.

Let us summarise our argument. As through one transgression and fall into sin all men incurred condemnation, so one act of redress brought acquittal and life to all. Just as through the disobedience of one man all were reckoned sinners, so by the obedience of one Man all will be reckoned righteous.

Now the Law came in as an interlude in order to increase sin by making sin the transgression of a divine commandment. But this very multiplication of sin only brought forth a more abundant stream of the divine kindness. God purposed that as sin had reigned in its kingdom of death, so also the divine kindness might reign through its gift of righteousness in the realm of life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE SPIRIT OF JESUS AND HOLINESS OF LIFE

6. What then is our conclusion ? Are we to continue in a life of sin in order that God's free redeeming

love may have a larger scope ? Away with the blasphemous thought ! How is it possible that we, who at our conversion died to a life of sin, should continue to live in our old manner ? Surely you understand that we who were baptised into union with Christ Jesus were baptised into a special relationship with His death. In fact, we were buried with Him through our baptism—buried into identification with His death, that as Christ was raised from the dead by a glorious act of divine power, so also we should walk in moral newness of life. For if we have been grafted into union with Christ so as to share His death, we shall also share His resurrection. We know from experience that our former unregenerate self in some very real sense shared His crucifixion, in order that the body, with its carnal impulses, might be so paralysed that we should be no longer compelled to act as slaves of sin. For just as a dead man is exempt from the claims of the law, so the Christian is exempt from the demands of sin. Now if we die with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more ; death no longer exercises lordship over Him. His death to sin was a death which He died once and for all. His life is an eternal life lived to God. So do you, too, on the one hand recognise yourselves to be dead to sin, but, on the other hand, to be living unto God through your spiritual union with Christ Jesus. Do not allow sin to exercise its dominion over you through your mortal body so that you should obey its lusts. Do not go on presenting your bodies as instruments of wickedness in the service of sin ; but by one decisive act of will present yourselves to God as alive from the dead and your members as instruments of righteousness in the service of God. Sin shall not dominate you, because you are not under the

dispensation of the Law, which would control you by external commands, but under a dispensation of God's loving kindness and grace, which inspires you from within to right living.

What follows from this great fact ? Are we to continue sinning because we are not under Law but under Grace ? Perish the thought ! Are you not aware that to whomsoever you are offering yourselves as obedient slaves, his slaves you are whom you obey, whether you are slaves of sin with death as the result, or the obedient slaves of God with righteousness as the result ? I thank God that you, who formerly were slaves of sin, have now given your heart's allegiance to that form of teaching into which you have been initiated. So, being freed from sin's slavery, you have become willing slaves of righteousness. I am speaking to you in a very human manner because of the limitations of your mortal understanding. As you once presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and licence, so as to work licentiousness, so now I exhort you by one decisive act of will to dedicate your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in holiness of character. When you were slaves of sin you were free from righteousness. What was the harvest which you then reaped from practices which now you blush to recall ? The result of such practices is moral and spiritual death. But now, being set free from slavery to sin, and being transferred to a glorious slavery to God, you reap a harvest of holiness and in the end life everlasting. For the wages which sin pays is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

7. Let me use another illustration. You are, of course, aware, brethren, for I am speaking to men acquainted with law, that law has power over a man as

long as he lives. The married woman is legally bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband die, she is released from the section of the code known as the " Law of the Husband ". If then, during the life-time of her husband she marry another, she will be stigmatized as an adulteress. If, however, the husband die, she is released from the law, so that she will not be accused of adultery if she enters upon another marriage. So, too, you my brethren, through your identification with the crucified body of Christ, have died to the Law, and the Law is consequently dead to you, so that you are free to be married to another, even to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth the fruit of good works to God. For when we were living in our carnal state, our sinful passions, stimulated by legal prohibitions, were active in our members and brought forth their deadly harvest of sin. But now, being released from the Law, and having died to what once held us in bondage, we are free to serve God in the new spontaneous life of the Spirit, no longer cribbed and confined by the antiquated shackles of the external Law.

What then is our conclusion ? Is the Law sinful ? Not at all ! But I should not have realised what was sinful, except through the Law. I should not have known illicit desire, unless the Law had said : " Thou shalt not indulge illicit desire ". But sin, finding its occasion in the Commandment, produced in me all kinds of illicit desires. For where there is no Law, there is no sin. I lived in my childhood without any consciousness of Law. But as soon as I became conscious of Law, sin sprang into being. The result was my spiritual death. The Law, which was intended to bring life, actually brought death. For sin, taking occasion from the Law, led me astray, and through the

Law slew me. So I conclude that the Law itself is holy, and the Commandment is holy and righteous and good. Did, then, what is in itself good become deadly to me ? No ! But sin, in order that its essential sinfulness might be revealed, taking occasion from what was good, wrought death to me, that sin, through the coming of the divine Commandment, might be shown up in all its excessive wickedness. We are well aware that the Law is spiritual and inspired by the Spirit of God. But I am carnal, sold into bondage to sin. My actions are performed blindly. I do acts which are contrary to my desire, acts which, in fact, I detest. If, then, my conduct is contrary to my desire, I assent to the excellence of the Law. It is not then my real Self that is guilty, but the sinful impulse which dwells in me. I know that in me, that is to say in my carnal nature, there dwells nothing good. I have the desire to do what is good, but I lack the will-power to carry that good into effect. I find that I am impotent to do the good which I desire ; while, contrary to my desire, I practise the evil which I detest. If, then, I detest my actual conduct, it is no longer my real Self which is responsible for the evil action, but the evil impulse which is present in my nature. When I desire to do what is right, I find within me a tendency to do what is wrong. My conscience assents to the Law of God, but I find another law in my members opposing the law of my higher Self and bringing me into bondage to the evil tendencies of my lower Self. Miserable man that I am ! Who shall deliver me from this deadly conflict between my higher and lower Selves ? I thank my God, Jesus Christ my Lord is the great Deliverer. So, then, with my real Self, my higher Self, I obey the divine Law ; with my lower Self I yield to the sinful impulse.

8. Our conclusion is that now God pronounces no sentence of condemnation upon those who are spiritually united with Christ Jesus, because the vital principle of the life-giving Spirit has freed us, in union with Christ Jesus, from the old external Law with its inevitable concomitants of sin and sin's resulting death. The Law was incapable of achieving for us this freedom, because its requirements were impossible of fulfilment by the human will. But God, by sending His Son, incarnate in the flesh in which man sins, in order that He might deal with sin, passed sentence of death upon sin, and at the same time made it possible for us to fulfil the righteous requirements of the Law. I mean, of course, those of us who are living, not according to the passions of our lower nature, but according to the spontaneous impulse of the Holy Spirit. For the minds of those who are living on the plane of the fleshly nature are occupied with carnal thoughts ; but the minds of those who are living upon the plane of the Spirit are occupied with the thoughts of the Spirit. Now the mind of the fleshly nature tends to death, but the mind of the Spirit brings with it abounding vitality and a consciousness of peace with God. For the mind that lives upon the carnal plane is in a state of inevitable hostility to God, since it is not obedient to the will of God and by its very nature cannot be. It is a moral impossibility for those whose minds and wills are dwelling upon the fleshly plane to be well-pleasing to God. But you are not living upon the fleshly plane but on that of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God is dwelling within you. I need scarcely remind you that if a man does not possess the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. But if Christ is spiritually dwelling in you, your body is indeed condemned to die as a result of sin, but your spirit is infused with the power of an immortal life,

because it is active with the holiness of God. Now if the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, He, who raised Christ Jesus from the dead, will in like manner quicken your mortal bodies through the agency of His Spirit which dwells in you.

So then, brethren, we are under an obligation, not to the flesh, to live on the fleshly plane—for if you live on the fleshly plane you are travelling the road to death; but if, by the aid of the Spirit, you mortify the tendencies and deeds of your bodily nature, you are on the road to immortality, because it is those who are under the sway of the Divine Spirit who are the sons of God. At the moment of your conversion you did not receive the timid spirit of a slave, to relapse into fear, but you received the free spirit of a son, which brings the assurance that God is indeed our Father. In fact, the Divine Spirit Himself testifies to our spirit that we are sons of God. And if we are sons, we are also heirs, heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ. This is true if we share in His suffering, in order that we may be also made sharers in His glory. I mention suffering—yet it is my conviction that the sufferings of this present age are as nothing in comparison with the glory which will one day dawn upon us. It is true that the whole Creation is eagerly waiting for the moment when the redeemed of mankind will be revealed as indeed God's sons. For the Creation has been subjected to frustration. It suffers, not of its own volition, but as part of the divine purpose, God having willed that it should move forward in eager anticipation of a perfection for which it is destined. It is God's purpose to liberate Creation from the thralldom of decay into the amplitude and freedom of the glorious life of God's own household. We are conscious of the present pain and travail-pangs of the whole Creation. We, too, who already possess in ourselves the first

instalment of the divine life of the Spirit, find ourselves still unsatisfied, still eagerly waiting for a state of complete sonship to God, which will be manifested in the liberation of our body from bondage to mutability and death. Our ultimate deliverance is still a matter of hope. Now a hope that is realised is no longer a hope. No one keeps on hoping for something which he is already experiencing. But if we are hoping for something which we are not yet experiencing, we are living in a state of expectant constancy. So, too, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. We are ignorant as to what we ought to pray. But we have the comfort of knowing that the Holy Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings at once inarticulate and intense. But God, who searches hearts, understands the mind of the Spirit, for it is according to the will of God that He intercedes for Christians. Now we know that God makes all experience contribute ultimately to the good of those who love Him, to those, that is to say, who, in line with His eternal purpose, have been called into union with Him. For those whom in the depths of eternity He foreknew, them He foreordained to share the likeness of His Son, that He might be the eldest in a large family of brothers. And those whom He foreordained, them He also called ; and those whom He called, them He accounted righteous ; while those whom He accounted righteous, them He also promoted to glory.

What are we to say in view of all this ? If God is on our side, who can be against us ? God, who spared not His own Son, but freely offered Him up for our deliverance—how is it possible for Him to refrain from giving us with Christ all things ? Who shall be able to bring any charge against God's own chosen ones ? It is God Himself who pronounces our acquittal. Who will

dare to bring in an adverse verdict ? Remember that it is Jesus Christ Himself, dead, risen, ascended to the right hand of God, who intercedes on our behalf. Is it possible for anyone or anything to separate us from the love of Christ ? Can pain, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or exposure, or danger, or sword ? I use these terms because our actual experience as Christians illustrates the words of the old Psalm : “ For thy sake we are being put to death all the day long. We have been regarded as sheep for slaughter ”. But in all these trials we prove to be more than conquerors through Him who has bestowed upon us His love. For I am fully convinced that neither death, nor life with all its perils, nor angels, nor spiritual powers, nor things present, nor things future, nor cosmic forces, nor spirits of the height, nor spirits of the depth, nor any other mode of being, will be able to sever us from the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord.

THE DESTINY OF ISRAEL

9. I am speaking the truth, conscious of my spiritual union with Christ ; I am not lying ; my conscience, as illuminated by the Holy Spirit, approves when I say that I suffer extreme pain and ceaseless heart anguish. I could even pray that I myself might be devoted to destruction and separated from Christ, if only such sacrifice could avail to save my brethren according to the flesh. They indeed are Israelites, heirs of that name of privilege ; they have been adopted into a special filial relationship with God ; amid them has dwelt the glory of the Divine Presence ; theirs are the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the temple-worship, and the promises. Theirs are the Patriarchs, and from their midst, according to His

human birth, has come the Messiah, who is over all, God, blessed for evermore. Amen.

You must not imagine for a moment that the promise of God has failed because some of Israel have been rejected ; for not all members of the nation of Israel are also members of the real spiritual kernel of the Holy People. Nor are all those who are descended from Abraham his privileged sons, for the Scripture says : " In Isaac shall thy seed be called ". Ishmael and his descendants are not included in the promise. That is to say, not all descendants according to the flesh are also privileged sons of God. It is only those who are born as a result of the promise who are counted as Abraham's offspring. This is made clear in the actual words of the promise : " At this time next year will I return, and Sarah shall bear a son ". Nor is this the only instance of the principle of which I am speaking. Rebecca conceived through intercourse with one husband, our father Isaac. While the two babes were yet unborn and had done nothing, either good or bad, in order that the divine purpose with its principle of free electing choice might be exhibited, (namely, the principle that God's call to privilege has nothing to do with the merits of the persons concerned, but solely with the divine initiative), the oracular words were spoken to Rebecca : " The elder shall serve the younger ". The Prophet Malachi even puts into the mouth of God the words : " Jacob I loved ; Esau I hated ".

What then is our conclusion ? Are we to say that God could be unjust ? Most certainly not ! Yet God's power of choice is absolute. This is shown by that passage of Scripture where God says to Moses : " I will be pitiful to whom I choose to be pitiful ; and I will show compassion to him to whom I choose to show

compassion". The decision rests not on the will or conduct of the man in question, but on the will of God, who chooses to be gracious.

Take another instance—that of Pharaoh, King of Egypt. The Scripture tells us that God said to Pharaoh: "For this purpose I raised thee up, that in my dealings with thee I might exhibit my power, and that the fame of my name might be noised abroad throughout the whole world". Our conclusion then is that God shows mercy to the man to whom He chooses to show mercy, and hardens the man whom He chooses to harden.

Perhaps someone will object: "Why then does God condemn the man whom He Himself hardens? For man is impotent to resist the divine will". After all, who are you, a human being, to venture to argue with God? Has the clay the right to say to the potter: "Why have you made me in this particular form?" Surely the potter has the right out of the same lump of clay to make one model for honourable uses and another for meaner uses. The objection falls to the ground when you consider the divine action. God, desiring to manifest His wrath and to make known His power, endured with much patience the deeds of those men who might be described as "vessels of wrath", framed for destruction. On the other hand that He might make known the wealth of the glory of His kindness to "vessels of mercy", whom He had prepared for glory, He chose and called us—not only from among the Jews, but also from among the Nations. It is to this fact that the Prophet Hosea referred when he said: "I will call a people that is not my people, my people; and her who was not beloved, I will call beloved. And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them: 'Ye are not my people', there shall they be called sons of the Living God". Isaiah also refers to the

rejection of a portion of the Chosen People when he says : " If the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant shall be saved ; for the Lord will perform a decisive act of amputation upon the earth ". Isaiah also prophesied in an earlier chapter : " Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we should have become as Sodom, and should have been made like unto Gomorrah, the cities of the Plain which the Lord destroyed ".

We come now to another aspect of our problem. How are we to explain the fact that the Nations, while not seeking ethical perfection, have actually found righteousness, I mean the righteousness imputed by God to a man upon that man's acceptance of Christ in loyal trust ; while Israel, who sought for righteousness by the fulfilment of the Law's commands, were never able completely to fulfil those commands and so failed to obtain righteousness through observing the letter of the Law?

What was the reason for Israel's failure ? The reason was that they rested on a system of merit in their efforts to find acceptance with God, and not on a system of simple faith and receptive trust. Hence they failed to recognise the Messiah, Jesus, when He offered Himself to Israel. To use the Prophet's phrase : " They stumbled against the stone of stumbling ". As God said : " Behold, I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence. And he that believeth in him shall not be ashamed ".

10. Brethren, you must know that the goodwill of my heart is directed towards my Hebrew brethren. My continual prayer to God on their behalf is that they might find salvation in Christ. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but an ignorant zeal.

They do not comprehend God's method of obtaining righteousness, but seek to establish their own righteousness by the merit of their deeds. They have not yielded themselves to God's plan of obtaining righteousness. For everyone who has obtained God's gift of righteousness through loyal acceptance of Christ has nothing more to do with the Law—that is to say, a Law commanding certain external acts. I speak of the external performance of acts, for Moses himself describes the righteousness of strict law-observance in the following words : “ The man who does these acts shall in this way find life eternal.”

Now this teaching of righteousness by faith is not difficult, nor is the religious experience expressed in these words hard to come by. Let me illustrate this accessibility of true religion by some well known words dealing with Faith-Righteousness : “ Do not say in your heart : ‘ Who shall ascend into heaven ? ’ ”—that is to say, in order to bring Christ down to earth and so make Him accessible to men ; or “ Who shall descend into the abyss ? ”—that is to say, to bring Christ back from the world of the dead. The Scripture proceeds : “ The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart ”. I transfer these words of the Old Testament and use them to refer to the message of faith which we preach—that message which is close at hand. For if you confess with your mouth your trust in the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. For a man believes in his heart and is accounted righteous. He confesses Christ with his mouth and so confirms his salvation. Another passage of Scripture tells us that no man who trusts God shall ever be disappointed. There is no distinction between Jew and non-Jew. The same God is over all

men, abounding in loving kindness to all who approach Him in sincere prayer, " For every man who invokes the name of the Lord shall be saved ".

Now this Gospel has been specifically preached to the Jews, for quite obviously it would have been impossible for them to invoke One who had never been offered to their faith through the work of missionaries. They could not have heard the gospel message without the work of the Christian missionary, and the Christian missionary would never have proclaimed his message unless he had been sent by God. But he certainly was sent. To use the words of the Prophet Isaiah : " How fair are the feet of those who preach good tidings ! "

But you may say : " Many Jews do not accept the Gospel ". This was to be expected, for Isaiah asked the question : " Lord, has any man believed our words ? " Again, belief can only follow the hearing of the message of Christ. And did they hear ? Assuredly they did ! To quote Isaiah again : " The voice of the preachers went forth into all the world, and their words to the bounds of the habitable earth ".

Another point. Did Israel fail to understand that the Nations would be called ? They should have understood, for Moses long ago made the point quite clear. He wrote : " I will stir you to envy over a people that is no people. I will provoke you through a nation that is lacking in understanding ". While Isaiah actually dares to say : " I was found of them who were not seeking me ; I was revealed to those who were not asking anything from me ". But to Israel God says : " All day long have I stretched forth my hands to a disobedient and contradicting people ".

11. Does that mean that God has rejected His People ? Most certainly not ! God has not rejected

His People. So I assert with confidence, remembering that I myself am a member of the chosen nation, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His People, for when He chose them He foresaw the course of history and yet made the choice. Recall what is written in the passage which tells how Elijah at Horeb accused Israel before God : " Lord, they have slain thy prophets, thine altars have they hewn down. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life ". But what says the divine oracular response ? " I have left for myself seven thousand men, none of whom have bowed in worship to Baal ". The same is taking place at the present time. There remains a remnant chosen according to God's free grace. But if the remnant is chosen by grace, they are not chosen on the basis of the merit of their own works, for if that were the case, the grace of the choice would be no longer grace but obligation. Thus we reach the conclusion, so strange at first sight, that what Israel was seeking, Israel did not obtain ; but the elect remnant obtained it. The rest were hardened. Scripture has already described their state in the following words : " God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that did not see, and ears that did not hear until the present day ". David also says in the Psalms : " Let their table become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution to them. Let their eyes be darkened that they should not see, and bend down their back for ever ". I ask then : " Did they stumble that they might remain fallen ? " Most certainly not ! Yet by their fall it became possible for salvation to be offered to the Nations. The purpose of this offer to the Nations was to make Israel jealous on seeing how much others had gained by acceptance of God's will, and how much Israel had lost by their refusal of it. If, then, their fall

brought wealth to the world and their defeat brought wealth to the Nations, how much more wonderful will be the effect of the fulfilment of Israel's destiny !

And now I have a word to say to you non-Jewish Christians. I tell you that inasmuch as I am the Apostle to the Nations, I magnify my ministry in the hope of stirring to rivalry my fellow-Jews that so I may become the means of saving some of them. For if their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, what will their reception by God mean but life from the dead ? For if the first handful of dough be holy as set apart for God, so also is the whole lump ; and if the root be holy, so also are the branches. But if some of the branches have been broken off, and you, a wild olive, have been grafted in among the cultivated olive branches and been granted the privilege of having a share in the rich nutriment of the root of the olive tree, do not boast of yourselves as superior to the native branches. If you are tempted to boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. Perhaps you will reply : " But the native branches were broken off that I might be grafted in ". Very well ! They were broken off because of their unbelief, and you were grafted in because of your faith. Do not indulge your pride, but live in awe. For if God did not spare the natural olive branches, no more will He spare you. Consider both the goodness and the severity of God—His severity to those who fell, and His goodness to you, if you abide in His goodness. Otherwise you, too, will be cut away. While they, the Jews, if they do not abide in unbelief will be grafted in, for God is well able to graft them in again. For if you, the Nations, were cut off from the wild olive and, contrary to nature, were grafted into the cultivated olive, how much more

shall these, who by nature are of the true olive, be grafted in again to their own mother tree ?

I am anxious for you, brethren, to understand this revealed divine secret lest you be conceited—namely, that insensibility in part has affected Israel till the full number of the Nations have entered the Christian fold. Then all Israel shall be saved, as it is written in Scripture : “ The Deliverer shall come from Sion, and shall turn away impiety from Jacob. This is my pledge to them when I take away their sins ”. In connection with the Gospel, they became enemies of God for your sake, but in connection with God’s choice of them they are beloved because of their descent from the Patriarchs ; for God never revokes His gifts or His calling. As you, the Nations, were once disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy as a result of Israel’s disobedience, so, too, Israel have now shown themselves disobedient that you might obtain mercy, in order that they likewise may finally obtain mercy. For God has shut up the whole human race to disobedience in order that to all He may manifest His mercy. O the depth of the wealth of the wisdom and the knowledge of God ! How inscrutable His judgements ! How past finding out His ways ! Who has understood the mind of the Lord ? Or who has been His counsellor ? Who has first given to Him and so shall be repaid ? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things. To Him be glory for evermore. Amen.

LIFE IN CHRIST AND LIFE IN THE CHURCH

12. I beg you therefore, brethren, in view of these saving acts of the divine mercy (namely, the sacrificial atonement made for our sins and the gift of the indwelling of the life-giving Spirit), to dedicate your

bodies as a sacrifice to God at once living and holy and well-pleasing, in order that God, using your bodies as His instruments, may accomplish His purpose on earth. This is the rational ritual service to which you are called. Do not permit your minds to be conformed to the ideals of this present fleeting age, rather let them be transformed and renewed, in order that you may clearly discern what the will of God is—that will of God which is characterised by perfect goodness and perfect beauty.

I plead, through the spiritual insight divinely bestowed upon me, with every member of your society, not to have a higher opinion of himself than that which is warranted by the facts. Rather let him think of himself with due modesty, according to the gift of faith which God has bestowed upon each. For as we have many members in one body, but all members have not the same function, so we, the many, are one body in our Christian society, and each of us has his own special duty to perform for the benefit of the other members of the corporate body. Now each of us possesses spiritual gifts according to the divine bestowal. One of us will possess the gift of spiritual instruction. Let that man use it according to the extent of his spiritual insight and not for personal glorification. Another has the gift of practical service to the community. Let him exercise his gift for the good of others. The same advice is applicable to the teacher and the preacher. Let the official who distributes relief do so in singleness of motive. Let the person who is in a position of authority be active and diligent. Let the giver of charity give joyfully. Your love to each must be absolutely sincere. Detest every form of evil. Let no influence divorce you from what is right. Regard the brethren with a spirit of warm affection.

Be eager to give others the place of honour. Never let your zeal flag. Keep your spirit aglow. Do the work of the Lord in every detail—thrilled with the joy of hope. Face trouble bravely. Be untiring in prayer. Share your abundance with brethren in need. Make it your earnest aim to be hospitable. Bless your persecutors ; bless, I repeat the word ; do not curse them. Rejoice with those who are rejoicing ; weep with the mourners. Let your relations with one another be always harmonious. Do not be lifted up with a sense of your own importance, but associate with those who are beneath you in the social scale, in a spirit of human equality as man with man. Do not imagine yourselves to be more clever than you are. Do not repay evil with evil. Strive to make your character attractive. As far as you are concerned, do your utmost to live in peace with all men. Do not be continually sensitive about your supposed honour. Do not retaliate, beloved, but allow opportunity to the divine judgement, for we read in Scripture that God says : “ Vengeance is mine ; I will repay ”. We also read : “ If thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink ; for so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head ”. Do not allow yourselves to be conquered by evil, but conquer evil by good.

13. Let every man be obedient to the authority of Government. For there is no authority except from God. The existing authorities are constituted by Him. The man who resists authority is resisting the ordinance of God, and those who resist are under the divine condemnation. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Are you anxious not to be afraid of the Government ? Do what is right and you will receive its commendation. For the ruler is God's

servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, be afraid ; for he is not possessed of punitive authority to no purpose. He is God's officer empowered to punish the wrong-doer. You, however, should yield obedience not only because he has the power of inflicting punishment, but also for conscience sake. For the same reason pay your taxes. For those who levy them are attending to God's business. Render therefore to all their due ; to the tax-gatherer, the taxes ; to the customs officer, the duty ; respect to the official to whom respect is due ; honour to the official to whom honour is due. Do not continue to owe any debts, except the one unpayable debt of love. For he who loves another has fulfilled the Law. For the commandments against adultery, murder, theft and covetousness, and all the other commandments, are summed up and included in this commandment ; " Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ". Love never harms a man's fellow ; therefore love fulfils the whole Law. Remember, too, the imminence of God's new age and awake from sleep, for our salvation is already nearer than at the hour of our conversion. The night has moved on towards the dawn, the day is close at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us walk in a seemly manner as in the day—not in revels and drunkenness, not in unlawful sexual intercourse and wantonness, not in strife and envy. But clothe yourself with the Lord Jesus Christ and do not spend your time in planning how to satisfy your carnal lusts.

14. Take to yourself in friendship the man who is weak in his understanding of all that the Christian faith means. Do not criticise his scruples. One man believes that it is right for him to eat all kinds of foods ;

but the immature Christian thinks it necessary to be a vegetarian. Let not the man who eats meat despise the vegetarian, and let not the vegetarian despise the meat-eater, for God has accepted him. And who are you to pass judgement on the servant of Another? It is to his own Lord that he stands or falls. And stand he shall ; for the Lord has the right and power to make him stand.

One man makes a religious distinction between one day and another ; another man considers all days to be alike. Let each man be fully confident in his own mind. The man who sets apart a day, sets it apart for the Lord's sake ; and he that eats all foods does so to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God for the food. The man who abstains from eating abstains for the Lord's sake and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives only to himself and none of us dies only to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord ; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Whether, therefore, we live or die we are the Lord's. For this reason Christ died and rose again, experiencing both death and life, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. And what right have you to act as your brother's judge ? Or why do you despise your brother ? For we shall all stand before the judgement-seat of God. In the words of Scripture : " As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall render praise to God ". Each one of us, then, shall give account of himself to God. Let us no longer judge and criticise one another ; exercise your critical faculty rather in the endeavour not to be a cause of stumbling or offence to your brother.

I know and am persuaded, my judgement being enlightened through my spiritual union with the Lord Jesus, that there is no food which in itself is defiling to

a man. But if a man considers a food to be defiling, and yet eats, he does in fact defile his conscience. If your brother is injured by your eating food which he thinks to be defiling, you are not walking according to the claims of love. So do not, by your eating, spiritually ruin a man for whom Christ died. Do not so act that conduct, which in itself is good, should become an object of reproach. For the Kingdom of God does not consist of eating and drinking, but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. The man who in these matters is utterly obedient to the principles of Christ is well-pleasing to God and is approved of his fellow-men. Let us, therefore, aim at what makes for peace and mutual edification. Do not, for the sake of a meal, undo the work of God. All foods are clean, but are evil to the man who eats contrary to the dictates of his conscience. It is good to eat no animal food, to drink no wine, and to abstain from everything which would offend your brother. Keep your own stronger faith secretly as between yourself and God. Happy is the man whose conscience does not condemn him in the matter of what he eats. But the man who eats in spite of his scruples is condemned, because he does not eat in the confidence of faith. And every action which is done without such confidence partakes of the nature of sin.

15. We that are strong ought to bear the difficulties caused by the weak and not please ourselves. Let each of us act to please his neighbour for his good in order that we may help to build up his character, for indeed Christ pleased not Himself. The words of Scripture describe His experience : " The reproaches of them that reproached Thee have fallen upon Me". Now the Scriptures that were written aforetime were written to

teach us, that through the steadfastness and encouragement which we may draw from them we may live in an attitude of hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant to you to be likeminded with one another according to the example of Christ Jesus, so that with one accord and with one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you to the glory of God.

Christ became a minister of the truth of God to the Jews in order to fulfil the divine promises made to the Patriarchs, and that the Nations should glorify God for His mercy, as Scripture says : " For this reason will I praise thee among the Nations and sing praise to thy name ". We read also in another passage : " Rejoice, ye Nations, with his people ". And again : " Praise the Lord all ye Nations, and extol him all ye peoples ". And again, Isaiah says : " The branch of Jesse shall live, and he who arises to rule the Nations, in him shall the Nations hope ". Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Spirit.

THE CLOSE OF THE LETTER

I am indeed persuaded of you, my brethren, that you abound in goodness, that you are full of all knowledge and are able to fulfil the function of instructing one another. So I am writing to you with the more confidence to refresh your memory as to things which you already know. I write in my capacity as an Apostle through the grace bestowed on me by God, so that I should be a priest of Jesus Christ to the Nations ministering the Gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Nations might be acceptable to God,

sanctified by the Holy Spirit. I am proud in Christ Jesus of my work for God. I will not venture to speak of anything, except of what Christ has wrought through my own agency for the conversion of the Nations. God worked through me by preaching and by conduct, by mighty signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit. From Jerusalem as far as Illyricum I have fulfilled my mission as a preacher of the Gospel of Christ. My ambition is to preach where Christ has not been named. I do not wish to build upon a foundation laid by another. To quote the Scripture : " They to whom He has not been preached shall behold Him, and they who have not heard shall understand ".

I have often found my desire to come to you frustrated. Now, however, I no longer feel that these regions have a claim on me, while I have been eager for many years to come to you, and then to pass on from you to Spain. I hope to see you on my way and by you to be assisted on my journey, after the pleasure of my intercourse with you. But at the present moment I am starting for Jerusalem, carrying relief to the Christians there. The brethren of the Churches of Macedonia and Greece, out of the kindness of their hearts, decided to raise a subscription for the benefit of the poorer members of the Church in Jerusalem. Such was their decision—a natural one, because of the spiritual debt which they owe to the Mother Church. For if the Nations have shared the spiritual gifts of the Jewish Church, they are in duty bound to minister to the brethren in Jerusalem in material things. When I have completed this mission and have put the final seal upon this fruitful work of aid, I intend to journey by way of Rome to Spain. When I do come to you I am confident that I shall come with the fullness of Christ's blessing.

And now I beg of you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and through the love that is inspired by the Holy Spirit, to help me in my conflict by your prayers to God on my behalf. Ask that I may be delivered from the opponents of Christ in Judæa, and that my ministry to the Christians in Jerusalem may be acceptable. I trust that then, by the will of God, I may come to you in joy and pass a time of refreshment with you. May the God of peace be with you all ! Amen.

16. I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, the deaconess of the Church in Cenchrea. Welcome her in the Lord in a manner worthy of Christians, and give her support in any matter in which she needs your help. She herself has been the support of many, and indeed of myself.

Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, fellow-workers of mine in the cause of Christ. Indeed they have risked their own lives to save mine. Not only am I grateful to them for what they have done for me, but all the non-Jewish Churches share my gratitude. I am also grateful to the Church which meets in their house. Greet my beloved Epænetus, who was the first to be converted to Christ in Asia. Greet Mary, who toiled hard on my behalf. Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and fellow-prisoners—men who are outstanding in the apostolic body and who were in Christ before me. Greet my beloved Ampliatus in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who has proved himself in the service of Christ. Greet the members of the household of Aristobulus. Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet the Christian members of the household of Narcissus. Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who toiled for Christ. Greet the beloved Persis, for she toiled much in the

Lord. Greet Rufus, that eminent Christian, and his mother and mine. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren with them. Greet Philologus and Julius, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the Christians with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the Churches of Christ send you greeting.

I beg you, brethren, to beware of men who cause divisions and hindrances, contrary to the teaching which you have received. Avoid such persons, for they are not servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, but of their own animal desires. By fair speech and fine discourse they deceive the minds of the simple. The fame of your obedience is heard everywhere. I therefore rejoice over you and am eager for you to be wise in respect of what is good and innocent in respect of what is evil. May the God of Peace bruise Satan under your feet speedily !

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Timothy, my fellow-worker, sends his greetings. So also do Lucius and Jason and Sosipatros, my fellow-workers. I, Tertius, the secretary who wrote this Epistle in the Lord, add my personal greetings. Gaius, my host, and indeed the host of the whole Church, sends you his greetings. Erastus, the City Treasurer, greets you, and so does the brother Quartus.

And now to Him who is able to establish you according to my Gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, kept secret from all eternity, but now revealed and through the Prophetic Scriptures made known according to the command of the Eternal God, that all the Nations may yield to this Gospel the obedience of faith—to Him, God only wise, through Jesus Christ, be glory for ever and ever. Amen.